

Central Intelligence Agency



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Lt. General William G. Odom  
Director  
National Security Agency  
Ft. Meade, MD 20755-6000

Enjoyed talking to you at the Intelligence  
Policy Counsel. Attached is a description of  
SRI that I mentioned.

We would welcome some people from NSA.

Sincerely,

STAT

Director  
of  
Training and Education

Attachment: "Report on the First Year of the Soviet  
Realities Institute"

Report on the First Year of the Soviet Realities Institute

25X1 1. In 1985, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) recommended that the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) undertake an effort to increase Agency officers' awareness and understanding of the Soviet Union and the Soviet threat. The DCI charged the Office of Training and Education (OTE) to develop a program that would allow for "the exchange of knowledge and experience, improve the totality of our efforts to deal with the different aspects of the Soviet problem, and lead to officers who would be better prepared for assignments in the field or Headquarters." [redacted]

2. In response, OTE established the Soviet Realities Institute (SRI) and charged it with:

a. Providing training that underscored the totality of the Soviet Union as a political problem for the United States and as the first priority intelligence issue for CIA;

b. Strengthening the understanding of Soviet experts in areas not of their specialty and training officers who work on the USSR but whose academic or professional background on the Soviet Union is limited;

c. Challenging and enriching the perspectives of Soviet specialists;

25X1 d. Building a stronger sense of community among Soviet analysts and collectors. [redacted]

3. The operating philosophy of the Institute emphasizes:

a. Making the program available to any and all officers, regardless of directorate, who deal with Soviet affairs;

25X1 [redacted]

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b. Drawing upon the full range of resources--enigres, defectors, experienced Agency and Community experts, the academic, business and scientific communities;

c. Accommodating the schedules of busy officers by providing the training in intensive (one week or less) or part-time formats;

d. Videotaping presentations for self-study or overseas utilization;

e. Offering training that provides:

1) maximum challenge to conventional thinking;

2) maximum exposure to different perspectives on the USSR;

3) emphasis on "real world" Soviet behavior and on current and near term Soviet intelligence issues.

25X1 4. The Institute has been functioning for almost one  
25X1 year. In that time, nearly  officers have received training  
25X1 through a comprehensive program of seminars, lectures and  
25X1 specialized blocks. Students have come from the Directorate of  
25X1 Intelligence  Directorate of Operations  and  
25X1 Directorate of Science and Technology  Additional students  
25X1 have been drawn from the Intelligence Community Staff, the  
25X1 National Intelligence Council, and other Community members (FBI,  
25X1 NSA, DIA, the Armed Services and the Department of State).

5. The component parts of the program include:

a. Perspectives on the Soviet Union Seminars.  
Outstanding scholars, including Richard Pipes (Harvard), Seweryn Bialer (Columbia), and Gail Lapidus and George Breslauer (University of California, Berkeley) have offered integrated seminars of from three to five days in length on understanding the foundations, processes and objectives of the Soviet system and its leaders. Our goal is to run six of these each year.

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6. If resources are forthcoming, the Institute hopes to move into new areas:

- a. supporting intelligence-related research;
- b. supporting external training for Agency officers;
- c. facilitating interchange with organizations such as the Kennan Institute, Jamestown Foundation, and local universities;
- d. mounting a stronger effort in developing videotapes and other self-study materials;
- e. involving more speakers with practical first-hand experience in dealing with the Soviets;
- f. improving its ability to get issues of current concern before CIA officers;
- g. expanding service to a wider Intelligence Community audience.

25X1 7. Much has been accomplished in a short period of time, thanks to the support and involvement of outstanding scholars and practitioners in the academic, emigre and Government communities. The very positive response within the Agency to this effort demonstrates that PFIAE and the DCI are right in believing that there is a strong need to strengthen the understanding of the USSR among those who are invested with the responsibility of providing our government with the very best intelligence.

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